

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 541  
By Rinks

A RESOLUTION to honor Thomas A. Varlan of Knoxville, for meritorious service on the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations and for his appointment to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee in Knoxville.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this body should pause to honor members of the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, upon completion of their terms, who have performed their duties with the utmost integrity and whose efforts have ensured proper attention to myriad issues in fulfillment of the Commission's mission to serve as a forum for the discussion and resolution of intergovernmental problems, to provide high-quality research support to state and local government officials in order to improve the overall quality of government in Tennessee, and to improve the effectiveness of the intergovernmental system to better serve the citizens of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Thomas A. Varlan, born in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and having graduated from Bearden High School in Knoxville, received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Tennessee and his Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from Vanderbilt University, where he

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served as Managing Editor of the *Vanderbilt Law Review* and was a member of the Order of the Coif; he now resides in Knoxville, where he is a member of one of the State's finest law firms; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Varlan has served his community in many roles, including formal service from 1988 through 1998 as Law Director for the City of Knoxville, in which position he became well-versed in issues of municipal governance, as he was responsible for all matters related to public employment, taxation, and land use and successfully defended the City in numerous significant lawsuits; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as Knoxville's Law Director, Mr. Varlan served as President of the Tennessee Municipal Attorney's Association and joined the International Municipal Lawyers Association, which organization he served as Regional Vice President, and for a time, chaired the Litigation and Risk Management Section; and

WHEREAS, after serving the people of Knoxville for ten years as Law Director, Mr. Varlan returned to the private practice of law, continuing his commitment to good government both in that role and as Urban Coordinator for the Tennessee Municipal League, a position he has held since 1998; and

WHEREAS, having demonstrated unique and exemplary skill and knowledge of municipal issues, Tom Varlan was appointed in 1995 by Governor Don Sundquist to the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, which plays a vital role in the resolution of issues at the state and local levels; he served well and with distinction as a member of the subcommittee of the Commission that developed legislation to resolve the crucial issue of local government tort liability limits that served as the basis for a major advancement ultimately enacted by this great legislative body; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Varlan has distinguished himself in the practice of law in the areas of governmental relations, civil litigation, labor and employment law, and representation of quasi-

governmental and nonprofit corporations, in addition to chairing the Tennessee Bar Association's Litigation Section; and

WHEREAS, Thomas A. Varlan was recommended by Senators Fred Thompson and Bill Frist, M.D., of Tennessee to the President of the United States of America to serve as United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee in Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, in turn, the President of the United States nominated Thomas A. Varlan to serve as United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee, and his nomination was confirmed by a unanimous vote of the members of the United States Senate; and

WHEREAS, Thomas A. Varlan epitomizes the spirit and commitment characteristic of a true Tennessean and ought to be formally recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby thank Thomas A. Varlan for his countless contributions to the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations over the course of his eight-year term, commend his honorable and dedicated service to the good people of this great State, and congratulate him upon his appointment to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee in Knoxville.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.